

Conference To Prepare Hundreds Of Students With Disabilities For Future Careers

NEWS FROM THE DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR/DIVISION OF
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

CONTACT

Sharon Boland

DOL Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

302.761.8238 (office) or 302.757.6260 (cell)

sharon.boland@delaware.gov

dvr.delawareworks.com

<http://dol.delaware.gov/>

CONFERENCE TO PREPARE HUNDREDS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES FOR FUTURE CAREERS

Wilmington, DE, December 6, 2018 – On December 12th from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., hundreds of local high school students with disabilities will attend an all-day transition conference at the Dover Downs Hotel in Dover, DE, focusing on their future career and employment goals as well as learning what's current in transition services for youth with disabilities in Delaware.

Transition services include career counseling, work-based learning opportunities, soft skills instruction and preparation for postsecondary choices leading to employment. Now in its 17th year, the "Transition and Self-Determination Conference" plays a key role in helping students with disabilities make informed choices after high school by providing access to resources and employment information. This one day – parents, educators,

vocational rehabilitation staff, and community organizations along with many other stakeholders – come together to provide resources to help students transition smoothly from school to post-secondary education and careers.

Self-determination and learning the importance networking and community participation in the transition planning process are key themes of the event. Self-determination is the process of taking control and making decisions that affect one's life. The keynote presentation focuses on a mix of these themes and features the writer and cast from "Boundless! A Musical Journey," a stage performance featuring Delawareans with disabilities based on a famous "Free Our People" March that took place in 2003.

The writer of the show, George Tilson, will facilitate a panel discussion with several of the performers from the show. They will share what they learned about self-determination, employability skills, and even career exploration through the audition process, improvisational workshops, and rehearsals, leading to performances in front of live audiences.

"All students, including those with disabilities need to develop a career pathway leading to successful employment," said Delaware Department of Labor Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Director Andrea Guest. "The Transition Conference provides tools for self-advocacy and self-determination and the opportunity for students to learn how to reach their career goals."

The conference offers 25 workshops for students and adults shaped around the supportive nature of the transition community and important youth topics including employment, soft skills, sexuality, self-determination, self-advocacy, leading your individualized education plan (IEP) meeting, and work-based learning. Sessions include, "Learn Job Expectations and How to Sustain Employment," "Leading your IEP Meeting! It's Important to You and Critical

to Your Success,” “Shared Vision + Capacity Parents = Greater Student Outcomes,” and “Transition from High School to College: What Every Student Should Know.” Each workshop will be opened by a Youth Leader who will share their desired career path and what self-determination means to them.

The charge of the day is education, excitement, and empowerment. Participation and sharing are keys and to facilitate this.

“This type of conference is very important so students learn before graduation about all of the resources available to them,” said DOL Cerron Cade. “Our state may be small in size but we have a tremendous amount of career planning and employment resources for people with disabilities.”

The conference is a collaborative effort between the Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), the Department of Education (DOE), Division for Visually Impaired (DVI), and the Division of Development Disabilities Services (DDDS) along with a variety of other agencies and organizations.

The Delaware Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is committed to providing individualized services to employers and people with disabilities, developing career pathways that link qualified employees to jobs, resulting in greater independence and a more inclusive workplace.



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